

SUMMARY MINUTES
Non-Conforming Subcommittee on Off Premise Signs
Greensboro Sign Committee

The Subcommittee met on Thursday, September 11, 2008, at 11:30 a.m. in the Planning Director's Office, 3rd Floor, Melvin Municipal Office Building. Present were subcommittee members Marsh Prause and Dan O'Shea and staff Dick Hails and Rawls Howard.

Staff reviewed several maps just completed that showed the number and location of all billboards in the City and those that were non-conforming. These were based on an actual just-completed inventory by Planning staff. The data indicated that 86% of all billboards (of 273 total locations and about 500 sign faces) are non-conforming, for a variety of reasons, including spacing, size/height and zoning.

The first topic discussed was on standards for non-conforming (N-C) billboards to be replaced and rebuilt on the same site, with upgraded design standards to improve the appearance of these signs. Standards were reviewed on location, compatibility, impact and modifications. Additional discussion noted how the new sign poles and frames/structures might be designed to fit with urban buildings and structures nearby.

The next topic discussed was on allowing N-C billboards to be relocated to other locations. It was felt that there was a priority area within the Downtown area and major gateways leading into, where there was a higher priority to allow old (and often unsightly) N-C billboards in these locations to be removed and relocated elsewhere. Staff will produce a new "Central City" map by next meeting, showing these N-C billboards (about 50-60 total). With regard to allowing all the N-C billboards to be relocated from other locations, the large number of N-C billboards (about 250 locations and 400 sign faces) raised some serious concerns about the many new billboards that could pop up in brand new locations throughout the City. It was noted that similar types of design guidelines (as proposed for on-site relocations) would be essential to have, if any billboards were to be relocated.

The topics of N-C billboards moving within Downtown and into Mixed Use areas and Activity Centers were deferred until the next meeting. Staff will send out a status report on recommendations from the Downtown Design group on signs within Downtown. Staff will also produce a map showing activity center locations, in addition to some other prospective relocation sites.

The next meeting of the Subcommittee was set for Wednesday, September 24 at 11:30 am in the City Planning Director's Office.

Submitted by D. Hails, 9-11-08